Giving Sairy the Real Cure

By Sewell Ford

"PRETTY soft, this heiress stuff; eh, Trilby May?" remarks Barry Platt, finishing his fifth hot biscuit and his third helping of Aunt Luella's strawberry preserves.

"It isn't absolutely poisonous," I admits. "Anyway, it's got something on life in an East Side studio while a hot wave is doing business."

"You ought to feel like a regular person," he goes on, "owning a country home in New Hampshire."

"Oh, well," says I, "I expect I deserve it. But I didn't expect, when we started out last Friday to hunt for an aunt I'd almost forgotten, to get more than a bid for a week end visit. And then to have a furnished house and a farm wished on me—well, you see it pays to be modest. It is perfectly bully up here, though, isn't it?"

Everybody agreed that it was. So after we had finished our first real meal in the old dining room we drifted out into the back yard to watch the sun dropping behind the hills, off Vermont way. Over in the east we could see Monadnock lifting its bare, horned peak against a pile of popcorn clouds that were tinted spectacular. A bird high in the big elm trilled a few liquid notes, and from somewhere near the doorstep a cricket chirped cheerfully. So everything was calm and lovely.

That is, until Inez reminded me that we'd better do the dishes before it got dark.

"What a crepehanger!" says I. "The dishes can wait, can't they?"

"But you don't think to get no kerosene," protests Inez, "and them lamps don't look much good, anyhow. That wood fire in the stove goes out, too, and the dishwater gets cold."

"Once more, Inez," says I, "hang the dishes."

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BUT Inez has a practical, one-track mind. "If we stay here," she goes on, "we gotta do 'em three times a day; and cook, and make up beds, and everything. Lotta scrubbin', too."

"Oh, we'll get somebody in to attend to all that," says I. "I'll have Barry take me down to the village first thing in the morning and I'll look up some domestic help. Uncle Nels has already suggested that. I expect we'll need a cook and a maid, and perhaps an extra girl for cleaning until we get things to rights. Maybe I'll pick up a man for the outside work, also. We might as well have a full force. Uncle Nels can well afford it."

"Sure," agrees Inez.

So we let the dishes ride for the night and enjoyed the cool evening and watched the stars come out until every one got sleepy. I had found some candles in a kitchen closet and we were drifting off to our rooms when Barry had to pick another flaw.

"Oh, I say!" he called back. "Where do I get my bath in the morning? I don't remember seeing any tub, you know."

"Where do you think you are, anyway?" I demanded. "At the Plutoria? Come out of it, Barry boy. This is a real farmhouse you're living in, and bathtubs aren't listed."

"But—but even farmers have to take baths, don't they?" he asked.

"There's no law about it," says I. "Still, they do indulge occasionally. Some make it a Saturday night affair, others save it up for Fourth of July, and usually they use a washtub in the kitchen. But this morning plunge stunt they only read about and shudder over, so until we can revise the plumbing I think you'll either have to give up your city habits or make an early dash down to the brook."

"How annoying," says Barry.

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YOU see, he's one of those 100 per cent New Yorkers who are always surprised because they can't get their favorite morning paper with their breakfast, no matter how far from home they wander, and who curl the lip of scorn at all small town ways. True, he lived upstate until within a couple of years ago, but those are the worst kind; especially the Manhattanites who really live in Flushing or Teaneck or Yonkers. They're so afraid you will suspect they weren't born at the corner of Broadway and 42d that they overdo the act. Like the true southerners who always yell loudest when the band plays Dixie—you can almost be sure they come from Delaware or south Jersey.

Anyway, Barry had to get acquainted with a bowl and pitcher in the morning, and there wouldn't have been any hot shaving water if Uncle Nels hadn't been up early and started the kitchen fire. He's strong for all the simple life stuff, Uncle Nels is. With his backwoods training, it can't come any too crude for him. I heard him stirring before sunrise, and soon after I saw him out at the pump in the back yard with a tin wash basin and a cake of yellow soap. He had the coffee going and the eggs started before either Inez or I showed up. However, I didn't fancy facing a continuous round of fried eggs, so right after breakfast Barry and I drove into Chenwick, called on Squire Sweat and asked where we could sign on a good cook and maid.

"Hey?" says the squire. "You mean you're lookin' for a hired girl?"

"Girls," I corrected.

He shook his head. "Mighty scarce article up here, hired girls are," says he.

"Of course," says I, "but there must be a few knocking around. No intelligence office in town, I suppose?"

It was a good guess. There wasn't.

"But what do folks do when they need servants?" I insisted.

"Mostly," says he, "they do without."

"Oh, come, squire!" says I. "Surely there must be an employment agency in Keene."

"Not for hired girls," says he. "They'd all rather work in the mills and factories, and they do. A few of the summer people bring out help from Boston, but as a rule they don't stay long. Not on farms."

"See here," says I, "do you mean to tell me that we can't hire a cook anywhere in this whole district?"

"If there was one loose," says he, "I'd have had her long ago to help out Mrs. Sweat when she has half a dozen summer boarders."

"What about getting a man for outside work, then?" I asked.

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"CHORE hands are just as scarce," says he. "Harder to find, if anything. I've been offering $5 a day for 'em to help with my haying."

"Why, that's absurd!" says I.

"It's worse than that," says he. "Don't you know, Miss Dodge, that there are thousands of abandoned farms in New Hampshire? Fact! I can sell you a dozen or more in this county. Just because you can't get help to work 'em."

"And if we stay here," I goes on, "we must do every bit of our own work—cooking, scrubbing, wood chopping and everything?",

"That's the situation, miss," says he.

"I knew there was some trick about this heiress business," says I. "Instead of falling into something soft I've had a job wished on me, have I? Well, I'm not crazy over it, I'll tell the jury. As I see it, you can get as warm in a hot kitchen in New Hampshire as you can in a stuffy New York studio, only in town you can turn on an electric fan and have your meals sent in. Are you sure there isn't anyone we can bribe to do some work for us?"

"Now, lemme see," says the squire, rubbing a big hand over his bald head. "I don't know for certain, but maybe you could get Sairy Jewett. She's an accommodator."

"A which?" says I.

"She goes out by the day," says the squire. "Does cleaning and such work, and they say she's a good cook."

"Then lead me to Sairy," says I.

"All right," says he. "I expect you can get along with her."

"Why not?" says I. "What's the matter with her?"

"Oh, nothing much," says the squire, "only—well, I believe Sairy is a little peculiar."

"She isn't a dope fiend, is she?" I asks. "Or does she have a weakness for homicide?"

"No, nothing like that," says he. "She's harmless, Sairy is, and a good worker. "I'll send her right out. Maybe she'll take that girl of hers along, too. Millie's out of school now and might be some help."

"By all means, let's have Millie as well," says I. "Mr. Jewett also, if he's handy."

"Bill Jewett?" chuckled the squire. "No, I don't know where you could find him, and I doubt if Sairy does, either. Bill's been missing for a couple of years. Skipped, you know. That's why Sairy's an accommodator."

"I see," says I. "Well, I hope she starts in accommodating us before lunch time."

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THE squire thought she would, so after I had bought everything at the two stores that I could remember as needed, we went back to the farm. And shortly after 11 o'clock, as an old white horse drawing a rickety buggy stopped in the front yard, I rushed out to welcome Mrs. and Miss Jewett.

She wasn't a decorative person, Sairy Jewett. No. A skinny, flat-chested, bony-necked female, with bulgy eyes, overhanging front teeth, and a chin that faded away into her neck somewhat abruptly. But nothing offensive or malicious in her looks. In fact she greeted me real folksy.

"Yes," says she, "Squire Sweat told me what a pickle you was in out here, and while I got more'n I can 'tend to at home—six broods of young chicks to look after, and my raspberries just comin' on, and two acres of potatoes that need buggin', and a mess of all-over aprons I'd promised to finish up for the church sale next month—well, when he said how you was city folks and relations to Luella Dodge, I just dropped everything and come along. Not that Luella and me was on 'specially good terms. She didn't git on with anybody any too well, Luella didn't, if you don't mind my sayin' so. But she's dead and gone now, and she was a neighbor, and the good Lord says we must help one another when we can. So here I am, and as Millie is apt to git lonesome if she's left alone, I brought her along, too. She ain't much of a hustler, same as I am, but she can make herself useful if she has somebody to tell her just what to do, and I'll see to that part, don't you worry."

Where she found the breath to rattle all that out without a stop I couldn't imagine, but it seemed to come easy off her tongue. And while she was reeling it off she was climbing out of the buggy, unharnessing the old horse, and helping ease Millie to the ground. Millie needed a helping hand, I'll say. A derrick would have been simpler. For she is a perfect whale of a girl. You didn't need to guess her proportions, for she is wearing khaki knickers and woolen stockings, and all her ample curves are undisguised. Her face is big and round, too, and her ruddy cheeks are so plump that her little eyes seem almost lost in her expansive countenance.

"I wouldn't have guessed she was your daughter, Mrs. Jewett," I rashly suggested.

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"I KNOW," says Sairy, leading the old white horse into one of the open sheds and slipping on a rope halter. "Takes after her father, Millie does. She's all Jewett, every inch of her, even to her disposition. Mr. Jewett, he's a great lummox of a man—or was. Mebby you've heard. He skipped out on me two years ago last April, and where he is now, or whether he's still alive or not, the Lord only knows. I'm sure I don't. Ain't had a word nor a sign from him since, though Lem Seaver, that runs the Swanzey stage, he says he heard how Bill was workin' as helper in one of them roller coaster places down at Nantasket beach this summer. It'd be just like that great lazy hulk to git some easy job such as——"

"Yes, Mrs. Jewett," I breaks in. "And now if you'll step into the kitchen I'll show you and Millie about doing the dishes."

"Land sakes!" says she. "You don't need to show me nothing about this house. I worked here as a girl, when the Juddses lived here, and I was here for nearly a week before and after Luella's funeral. It wa'n't much of a funeral, at that, if you don't mind my saying so. You see, Miss Dodge, your Aunt Luella——"

"Thank you," says I, "but I've been told quite a lot about Aunt Luella. You may make up the beds after you've finished with the dishes and then you may start cleaning the living room. I'll be back presently."

This seemed to be the only way to check the raging flood of Sairy's conversation. At first I was afraid I might have hurt her feelings by running away right in the middle of a sentence, but I soon found that she wasn't a bit sensitive. Also that she was always ready to start another whenever anybody came within range. For she wasn't choosey about who she talked to. Inez would do as well as I, and she didn't hesitate to open up an entirely new line with Uncle Nels or Barry whenever either of them drifted by. Waiving the formality of an introduction was the easiest thing Sairy did. According to her code that was just so much lost time, so she simply went to it as soon as she sighted any one.

Of course, after we'd each had an earful, we kept out of the way as much as possible, but naturally it wasn't practical for me to escape altogether, as Uncle Nels and Barry did, by taking to the fields. And when mealtime came she tried to make up for all they had missed. I suggested that she stay in the kitchen and let Millie wait on the table, but Sairy wouldn't agree to that.

"Sakes, no!" says she. "You'd all starve to death waitin' for Millie to pass things, and like as not she'd spill the gravy. I'll do the waitin' and do it right, same as it's done in Keene."

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SO I suppose what we had was the last word in table service. I'll say it was prompt and vigorous, if not fancy. Sairy would dash in with both hands full of dishes and bang 'em down on the table. "Meat!" she would announce explosive, landing a platter of chops in front of Barry. "Boiled potatoes!" she'd call out, favoring Uncle Nels. "Green peas!" she would declaim, slamming them beside my plate. And then, before we could recover from the shock, she'd start one of her chatty monologues; choosing some topic of general interest, such as how she thought at first we all belonged to the same family, and how surprised she was to learn that Inez wasn't my sister or Barry my brother. And no little tricks of ours, like trying to do some talking among ourselves, would switch her off. She'd simply drop her own line and chime in on ours.

Not that we had any snobbish notions about keeping the lower classes in their place. In exchange for all the expert housework Sairy Jewett was reeling off at three a day I would have swapped a good deal of friendly talk and called it a bargain. But when it came to listening to a rapid-fire monologue that continued as long as any one was in earshot—that was a bit wearing.

And it wasn't so much the quantity of her patter as it was the quality. I've heard and read more or less about Yankee voices, from the down-east drawl to the clipped Connecticut dialect, and I've always thought the humorists were exaggerating. But now I know better. If you could put Sairy on the stage, voice and all, she would be a knockout. Her talk was a high-pitched coo that was almost too sweet and sugary to be true. Yet it was a carrying, penetrating tone, with the loud pedal on every third word that gave it a staccato movement which was just as pleasing as listening to a piano tuner at work. Every word seemed to start from somewhere up in the top of her head and each syllable came out clear and round. You didn't escape a single consonant, final or otherwise. And the merciless monotony of those high notes was something awful. After about an hour of it you felt as though you had been cuffed over the ears. So you can guess that we didn't linger at the table.

We had endured Sairy's running orations for two whole days before getting together formally as a council of war. Even the placid Inez, who could qualify as a long distance listener under almost any circumstances, had lost patience.

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"THAT woman's gonna drive me bughouse if she don't stop," declared Inez.

"Like water runnin' over a dam, her talk is," declared Uncle Nels.

"I can seem to hear her even when I'm asleep," adds Barry.

"I know," says I. "You'd almost think she was out for a non-stop record, and that sirupy coo of hers has got me all cloyed up. I feel as though somebody had dropped a sheet of sticky flypaper on my disposition. But I've been hoping all along that sooner or later she would run out of material."

"Not her," says Barry, getting reckless with his pronouns. "She has the fatal gift of conversation and an unfailing source to back it up. When Niagara goes dry maybe she will, too, but not before. She has had us at her mercy for five meals now and at each one she has enlarged upon some weak point in Bill Jewett's character, yet I can see that she has only begun to sketch him in for us. The really fine points about his lazy habits and general unworthiness she's saving up for us. And she has only touched casually on Millie and her Uncle Hank. There must be other members of the Jewett family and neighbors and people Sairy has worked for. Then there are her own likes and dislikes, and the trouble she's had with her knee. No, I can't see any chance that she'll ever lack for a topic. And I should say that the mystery of why Bill left home was thoroughly solved. My only wonder is that he didn't leave sooner and go farther. Patigonia or China would be none too remote for me if I was Bill Jewett."

"Me, I'm gonna wear cotton in my ears," announces Inez.

"That would merely muffle the sound of her voice," says I. "I'll bet you could hear her through a two-foot brick wall."

"Couldn't you hint to her," suggests Barry, "that she talks too much?"

"I have," says I. "But Sairy isn't the kind that takes hints. Of course, I could come right out plain and flat-footed and forbid her to speak while she was serving meals, but then I'm sure she would leave the next minute. And you've got to remember that for nine months or so out of every twelve she lives practically alone on that isolated little place of hers, two miles back from the main road. Day after day in the winter she sees no one but Millie and has no chance to exchange gossip or air her opinions. Think what that must mean to a person of her gifted abilities."

"Well, it's mighty tough to have all that pent-up conversation unloaded on us," protests Barry.

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"AND we left New York," Inez reminds me, "because a feller in the next block played a saxophone every Sunday. Huh!"

"Don't," Inez!" says I, "You almost make me homesick."

It was these careless words that Barry evolves his brilliant idea. "Say, folks! I've got it!" he announces. "I'll bet I can cure Sairy and not get her huffy."

"Shoot, Thomas Edison Marconi," says I. How?"

But he wouldn't tell. Instead he jumped into his car and went tearing off toward Keene in a cloud of dust. And by dinner time he had the plot all laid. Also I had set the scene by having a few well chosen words with Mrs. Jewett.

"I hope you don't mind music, Sairy?" says I.

"Me?" says she. "Land, no. I git into Keene for the band concerts in the square every time I can. I jest love any kind of music."

"That's nice," says I. "Mr. Platt's that way, too. You see, he writes plays, and he's thinking of doing the lyrics for a musical comedy. So he says he simply must have a phonograph going during meals, for that is when some of his best thoughts come to him. He got a machine today, and I expect he'll play it a lot. I thought I'd tell you, so you would understand."

"Sure!" says Sairy. "I'll make it real kind of cheerful, won't it?"

I'll say it did. For the records Berry had bought were the loudest jazz tunes he could find, and he had also asked for the loudest playing needles in stock. Then, parking the machine on the old sideboard where he could easily reach back and crank it or put on a new record, he waited until Sairy came in with the platter of cream salt codfish and started to tell us how Bill would leave her with no stove wood and go off fishing, when cr-r-r-ack rippety bang! went the phonograph as it swung into "Kitten on the Keys" or some such jazzy melody.

"Please don't let me interrupt," shouted Barry. "Keep right on, Mrs. Jewett."

She made a brave stab at it, I'll say, but even Sairy's penetrating coo was lost in the din of that impetuous syncopation which throbbed through the low ceilinged room. She gave it up and brought in the green corn, stepping smart and lively in time to the rhythm of the piece. But she was a patient soul, Sairy. She knew that a ten-inch disk couldn't run on forever, and when the final crash of cymbals came she was right there to fill in the gap.

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"AIN'T that simply grand?" says she. "But for real music you should hear old Sam Tuttle when he's playin' the fiddle for a dance over at Silverdale. 'Specially if some of the boys have been treatin' him to a few drinks of hard cider, as they usually do. Why, I believe old Sam——"

But just then Barry absent-mindedly slipped on one of Al Jolson's Mammy songs and once more Sairy was drowned out. True, it wasn't a fair competition. She hadn't a chance.

For three meals this went on before she finally gave up discouraged. Even after that she would forget and open her mouth to start another monologue, but all Barry had to do was to reach back toward the phonograph and Sairy would shut her lips tight and scuttle toward the kitchen. By the second day the cure was complete. For the first time in her life, probably, Sairy Jewett's light running tongue was checked.

"Behold," says Barry waving his fork at her vanishing back, "the perfect servant."

"Absolutely," says I. "But say, not a word of how you did it to Squire Sweat. Let's have him up for supper tomorrow night and hand him the surprise of his life."

"NO LITTLE TRICKS OF OURS, LIKE TRYING TO DO SOME TALKING AMONG OURSELVES, WOULD SWITCH HER OFF."

Occultism, Holding Paris in Grip, Produces Marvels and War Fears

"ANY GROUP, SINCE THE WAR, CAN MAKE A TABLE TURN, AND GET RAPS FROM IT. SOME THINK THAT NAPOLEON IS THERE; BUT THE MAJORITY TALK PSYCHO-PHYSICS AND ELEMENTAL FORCES."

BY STERLING HEILIG.

PARIS, July 6.

FROM PARIS has gone out, no doubt, all over the world, the "mystery of the little woman," the marvel claimed to have amazed Sarbonne scientists, "a flesh-and-blood woman, eight inches tall," who appeared out of nothing, "floated and turned somersaults in the air" and disappeared, "while eminent scholars gasped at so much overshadowing of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle!"

The quotations are from advance reports issued by co-workers with Mmme. Bisson in her investigation by a Sorbonne committee.

The name of the French university covers this climax of astonishing claims—until, at least, the committee publishes its own final report.

The world awaits it, breathless.

Either we are reaching a new epoch, or else Paris has gone wild on psycho-physics!

The Associated Press is following the investigation of Mme. Juliette Bisson, the Passy sculptress, by Prof. Charles Richet (of the Institute and Acamedy of Medicine) and colleagues appointed by the faculty of sciences of the Sorbonne.

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SIR ARTHUR has worked with Mme. Bisson, "one of the few experimenters of western Europe whose subjects (Eva Carriere in the present (instance) drip viscous liquid from their finger-tips"—which materializes from the universal ether and is the first sight we get of the stuff from which all things are made. Sometimes it becomes vapory and assumes forms resembling human faces or parts of human anatomy, reported principally by Sir Arthur.

The Sorbonne committee has seen the drip, in any case. It is reported that, on one occasion, it solidified to slender sticks or rods, like stalactites, from finger-tips to table—which was lifted by them, without effort of the subject.

The committee has "analyzed" them. No more else is known officially. By imperative instructions from the faculty of sciences the professors must not disclose anything prematurely. But the "little woman" has been prematurely disclosed by four scientists and Anna Barbin. The eminent engineer, Jeanson, with Jean Le Febvre, Jean de la Beauneville, and Rene Duval, have signed a proces-verbal of "it". And Anna Barbin.

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FROM the hands of Eva Carriere (they say) dripped a grayish-white substance, the size of an orange, which became oval, dissengaged itself and hovered. It modeled itself rapidly into the contour of a little woman, admirably formed, a tiny undraped woman of impeccable beauty. "We saw emerge, successively, the hips, the thighs, the legs and feet!"

This flesh-and-blood doll, "animate of legs, hands and torso, with long, luxuriant hair," was passed from hand to hand! "It remained in our hands ten seconds, and we were able to confirm the perfection of its members. It possessed weight. It felt dry and soft. I told it to repeat a movement which would show that it was alive. It turned a complete somersault!"

This is not a space writer's dream, but quoted verbatim from the alleged (and signed) advance report of what Mme. Bisson shows the Sorbonne committee. The venerated name of Camille Flammarion is brought in. He is eighty years old. The experiments take place in broad daylight. The personages who "solidify" (for a moment) are palpable. Male figures, even "with a punch," melt back into the universal ether.

"The form comes into being," says the advance report. "It remains in this world for only a brief space and returns to the mysterious source of origin."

Who cares? All want to see the "little woman." Will she appear again whence she melted?

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THERE is a curious similarity between the "little woman" and what Cadette St. Avit saw, 250 years ago, while working in the chateau of Hercules d'Astarac. "He had nothing better to do," says the mother of Jacques Menetrier (in French literature), "than to cork up sunlight in glass globes or carafes. Cadette St. Avit does not know how he did it; but what is certin is that, in the course of time, there formed in those carafes (well corked and heated) little women, like living dolls, but beautifully formed. You may laugh, my Jacquot; but one does not jest of these things when one sees the consequences. It is a great sin to manufacture little creatures who cannot be baptized. For, you see, who would consent to act as godmother to them?"

Yet the cases are utterly unlike. There was no need or time or possibility to baptize the "little woman" of the Sorbonne. She does not exist, any more. She came together for ten seconds, then melted away! In these ideas things may build up, but will they stay?

Miss Lena Lukens says perhaps.

It is she who, aided by the powerful engines of Prof. Danielins, sees and hears things in the higher plane which language cannot utter.

The engines (different from ray generators) deal with the mysterious "N" rays, whose existence in connection with the human body have been so often affirmed and denied.

Past uncertainty about them (says the professor) is due to the fact that "N" rays really belong to the higher plane and only impinge with utmost delicacy on our materiality—i. e., in human bodies whose intelligent forces are peculiarly dominated by the spiritual. In such they can be brought to a stimulating focus, to connect the subject with the higher plane. Things there, truly, are in four dimensions, so that it is difficult for Miss Lukens to tell all she perceives. But of one thing she is certain. In the higher plane you can make anything you please from the universal ether!

No finger drip in the higher plane!

"Some dear little children were playing 'house' in a gorgeous garden," she tells. "'Tilly-Will,' said one, 'do you make the dishes!' And the delicious little girl, not ten years old, reached u" into the air and fetched down cups and saucers out of nothing, just patting and pulling them into form!"

This sort of thing does not seem fictional to half of the Parisians who hear it. Each has some form of occultism which he, or she, believes in—since the war!

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THE laboring population clings to fortune telling by professional card layers, who flourish. In the upper ranks, palm reading similarly flourishes as a kind of individual gift. Where one can do it, there are fifty who believe it.

As for table turning (since the war), any of a thousand groups per evening can get raps and so forth. Some think that Napoleon is there, but the majority talk in psycho-physics.

The queer thing is elsewhere. It is a sentiment of waiting and expectancy, as of something coming, at hand!

The finger drip is right along these lines.

"What about clothes?" they ask Miss Lukens. (For, they say, Miss Lukens cannot wear a stitch when subject to the terrific "N" engines.) "Don't you feel embarrassed, up there?"

"I don't go up there," she answers. "I perceive from where I am, and do not know if it be far or near! They don't wear much, anyhow! Just filmy slips of splendid colors. Don't I wish that I could make such fabrics out of nothing! We shall do it—soon!—right here on earth. I have heard them talking about it in the higher plane. They were looking for some rolling mechanism. And yet——

"It is the only thing down here," they said, "that could have rolled!"

Around about were rusty picks and signs of interrupted work, as if the workmen fled—not to return.

Then an aged workman of the underground inspection told them that there was a story, though he himself had never seen the wagon. It dates from the old revolution, when they sacked the royal burial vaults of St. Denis and scattered the bones of the kings of France in contempt.

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THE restoration found and replaced many of the bones. "But not all!" said the aged artisan. Which is correct historically.

The rifles of the royal tombs were grim king haters. They conceived it a good jest to make off with the most illustrious remains as trophies. Where dispose them? "To the Catacombs!" they cried—where their trades unions in the days of kings and long enjoyed a safe retreat. Their meeting place was in this "dome."

"They moved the kings' bones in that packing case," said the old artisan. "The greatest kings of France are in it!" Later some one set it on a quarry roller and modeled the "smart working boy of Paris" in the attitude of dragging royalty where he pleased!

Now, quick to tell it!

Time passed. The young republic was triumphant but threatened by a kingly coalition. Then one lodge, night down there it was noted with dismay that the "working boy" and "wagonload of kings" had disappeared.

Far off they heard a rumble. Something was coming up the black ways with a jarring and a bumping and a clanking of rude footsteps. Their blood chilled as the jar became a roar, the roar a tumult and a dark shape thundered past them.

"The boy!" they cried. "The wagonload of kings!"

And fled.

"Next week," said the old man, "the Austrians and Prussians entered Lorraine and took Longwy, Verdun and the Argonne. But it ended in the French victory of Valmy."

The dread boy galloped down there when Napoleon rose and fell. He galloped for Charles X, for Louis Philippe, for Louis Napoleon and the war of 1870.

"War and trouble!" mourned the aged artisan in January, 1914.

It was printed in the American Sunday papers of February 15, 1914. You cannot get away from dated print!

And now the boy is galloping again.

Monsieur Roupe of the mushroom syndicate takes parties of society ladies down, 200 steps, to see the spot where he went by.

Perhaps Miss Lukens is right.

THE CATACOMBS, you understand, are the antique quarries from which old Paris was built. Now the mushroom growers are their only occupants. Forty members of the syndicate possess the only entrances, from their own cellars. Tenants of mean shops above, they are lords of mile-long streets down there!

Well, a boy named Gideon worked for M. Roupe in the hollow street. Planting spores down there he heard a distant rumbling. It was not the subway. There are no sounds down there, yet the rumbling grew deeper, nearer, more portentious. Suddenly the boy Gideon realized that such a noise was inexplicable, impossible! Something like a heavy train was coming up the black ways, but jarring, bumping, echoing, as with the clang of steps! And Gideon had just time to reach the stair when the rumble became a roar, the roar a tumult, and there thunded past him a black shape amid a pandemonium of nameless noises!

Roupe, the boss, did not much like the story, but when other mushroom growers came to whisper about it, he got up an exploring party. It was a trip of miles, down there, amid crumbling pillars and partial caveings. They took balls of twine and chalk to mark their way and powerful lanterns.

* * * *

NOW, I will simply tell, again, what I told in the Sunday papers of February 15, 1914. Two miles distant from the spot where M. Roupe now takes folks down to show them where it passed, they reached a "dome" or crossroads, with a higher ceiling than the "streets" of the old quarries. There stood a mysterious object.

The wagon!

The thing, you know, existed. It was photographed by magnesium light. Here is the untouched photograph. And as they left the thing just as it was, it still exists.

It was an ancient wooden packing case on a yet more ancient quarry roller. Its wooden tongue was held by something inexplicable—a human figure made of concrete over real bones. The white face was that of a youth. It bore the conceited smart-Alec smile of the "capable young Paris workingman." He was dressed as of 100 years ago. He held the wagon, ready to pull it—full of human bones!

It stirred the explorers deeply.

"THE ANCIENT SYSTEM OF FORTUNE-TELLING BY LAYING THE CARDS' IS GOOD ENOUGH OCCULTISM FOR THE WORKING GIRLS OF PARIS."

"PSYCHIC EXPERIMENTS OF JEAN DE LA BEAUNVILLE AND MME. BISSON IN PRESENCE OF SORBONNE SCIENTISTS AND SOCIAL LEADERS."

The Mosquito Plant.

THE virtues of the species of basil (Ocymum viride) known as the mosquito plant are attracting attention in England. An army officer has given a growing plant to the botanical gardens at Kew. He obtained it in Nigeria, where, he says, it is known to drive mosquitoes from its neighborhood, and the natives use an infusion of its leaves as a cure for malarial fevers. Its virtues are known in India also, as a border of it was planted round the Victorian garden in Bombay because the workmen were pestered by mosquitoes and suffered from malaria. As soon as the hedge was completed the mosquitoes left and there was no more malaria among the workmen.